

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 25 and 27-29, AMEND claims 25-28 and ADD new claims 30-33 in accordance with the following:

Claims 1-4 (cancelled).

5. (currently amended) The electronic commerce system according to claim ~~28~~ 30, further comprising a purchase and sale information managing unit concluding a transaction of the registered sale or purchase request, which is obtained by said searching unit.

Claims 6-8 (cancelled).

9. (previously presented) The electronic commerce system according to claim 26, further comprising a unit displaying a transaction partner that sets a transaction condition and a transaction partner that does not set a transaction condition by making a distinction between the transaction partners, when transaction partners searched by said searching unit are listed and displayed.

Claims 10-25 (cancelled).

26. (currently amended) The electronic commerce system according to claim ~~25~~ 30, further comprising outputting transaction completion information of the first and second commodities when, with regard to the first commodity, a first price stored in the first registered commodity data storing unit matches a changed price obtained based on the price change conditions registered in the second registered commodity data storing unit, and when, with regard to the second commodity, a second price stored in the first registered commodity data storing unit matches a third price registered in the second registered commodity data storing unit.

Claims 27-29 (cancelled)

30. (new) An electronic commerce system aiding in purchase and sale of commodities, comprising:

first and second storing units, under control of first and second transaction partners, storing first and second commodity data records related to commodities handled by the first and second transaction partners, respectively, each commodity data record stored in said first and second storing units including at least a commodity identifier for a commodity corresponding thereto, commodity price information, and a public disclosure indicator indicating whether other transaction partners are allowed to reference the commodity data record;

a central storing unit registering uploaded commodity data records corresponding to at least some of the commodity data records in said first and second commodity data storing units for which the public disclosure indicator indicates public disclosure is permitted, each uploaded commodity data record including: the commodity identifier for the commodity corresponding thereto, a usual commodity price, and price change conditions including an associated commodity identifier when an associated commodity may be transacted with the commodity identified by the commodity identifier of the uploaded commodity data record;

a search unit searching in said central storing unit for a first commodity identifier uploaded from said first storing unit for a first commodity handled by the first transaction partner, in response to a search request from the second transaction partner, and producing a search result with at least part of a matching uploaded commodity data record when a match is found; and

a purchase and sale judgment unit searching the second storing unit and judging the first commodity and a second commodity as tradable candidates when the matching uploaded commodity data record in the search result includes at least one associated commodity identifier and a second commodity data record is found in said second storing unit with a second commodity identifier matching the at least one associated commodity identifier, regardless of whether the public disclosure indicator in the second commodity data record indicates public disclosure is permitted.

31. (new) An electronic commerce system according to claim 30, wherein said central storing unit stores an associated commodity data record containing the associated commodity identifier,

wherein the associated commodity data record and the second commodity data record both include a desired transaction price and a desired transaction amount, and

wherein if said search unit finds a matching commodity, said purchase and sale judgment unit compares the desired transaction price and the desired transaction amount in the associated commodity data record and the second commodity data record and, if there is a mismatch, judges whether at least one of the associated commodity data record and the second commodity data record contains conditional data modifying at least one of the desired transaction price and the desired transaction amount.

32. (new) An electronic commerce system according to claim 31, wherein said purchase and sale judgment unit judges that a sale is possible when the conditional data exist in the at least one of the associated commodity data record and the second commodity data record and the conditional data indicate that the at least one of the desired transaction price and the desired transaction amount in at least one of the associated commodity data record and the second commodity data record can be modified to produce a match.

33. (new) An electronic commerce method aiding in purchase and sale of commodities, comprising:

storing, under control of first and second transaction partners, first and second commodity data records related to commodities handled by the first and second transaction partners, respectively, each commodity data record including at least a commodity identifier for a commodity corresponding thereto, commodity price information, and a public disclosure indicator indicating whether other transaction partners are allowed to reference the commodity data record;

registering uploaded commodity data records corresponding to at least some of the commodity data records for which the public disclosure indicator indicates public disclosure is permitted, each uploaded commodity data record including: the commodity identifier for the commodity corresponding thereto, a usual commodity price, and price change conditions including an associated commodity identifier when an associated commodity may be transacted with the commodity identified by the commodity identifier of the uploaded commodity data record;

searching the uploaded commodity data records for a first commodity identifier for a first commodity handled by the first transaction partner, in response to a search request from the

second transaction partner, and producing a search result with at least part of a matching uploaded commodity data record when a match is found; and

searching the second commodity data records to determine whether the first commodity and a second commodity, handled by the second transaction partner, are tradable candidates when the matching uploaded commodity data record in the search result includes at least one associated commodity identifier, where the tradable candidates are identified if one of the second commodity data records is found with a second commodity identifier matching the at least one associated commodity identifier, regardless of whether the public disclosure indicator in the one of the second commodity data records indicates public disclosure is permitted.